

ProQuest Platform Search Strategy Tips

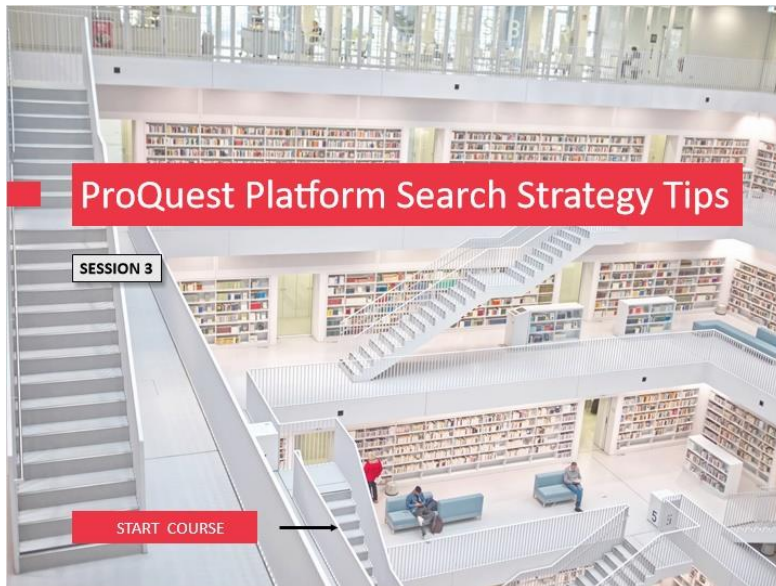
1. ProQuest Platform Search Strategy Tips

1.1 Introduction



Notes:

1.2 ProQuest Platform Search Strategy Tips



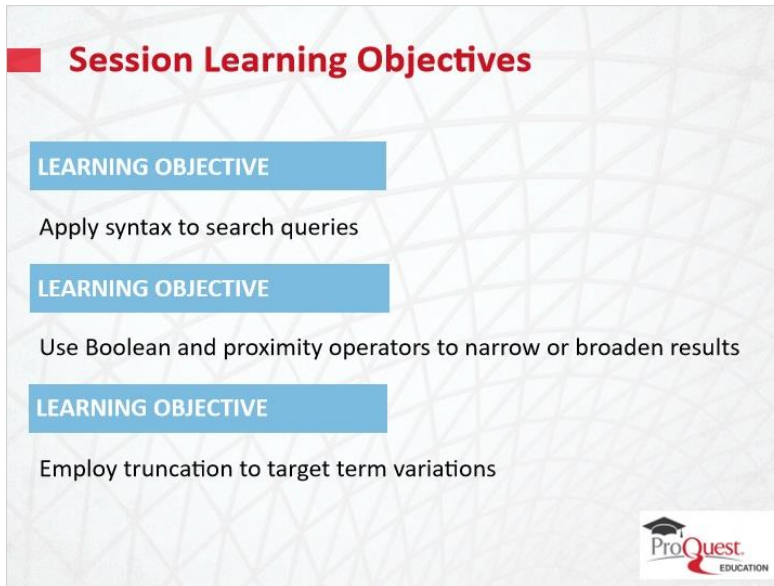
Notes:

Welcome to this session on *ProQuest Platform Search Strategy Tips*. This learning module introduces ProQuest search syntax and provides information on structuring a search to increase the relevancy and precision of results.

Viewing the *ProQuest Platform Basic Search* e-learning module prior to this session is recommended. However, no previous search experience is required.

To begin, click on the **START COURSE** button.

1.3 Objectives




■ **Session Learning Objectives**

LEARNING OBJECTIVE
Apply syntax to search queries

LEARNING OBJECTIVE
Use Boolean and proximity operators to narrow or broaden results

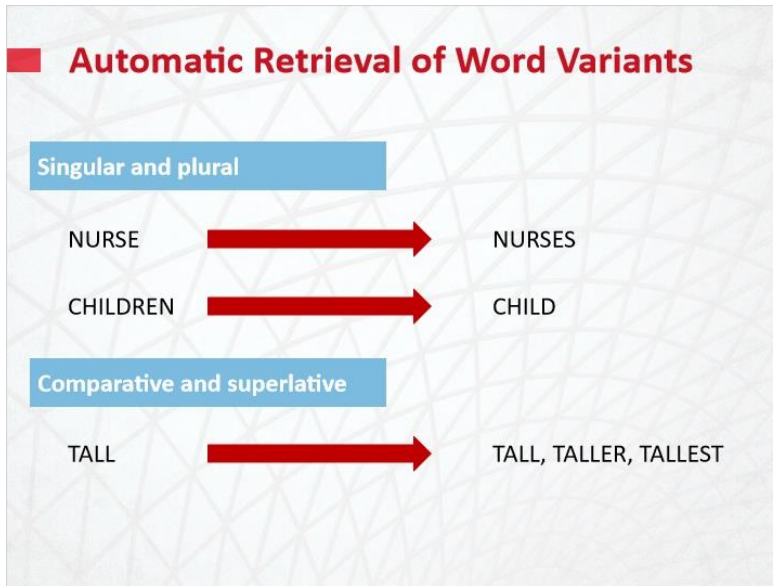
LEARNING OBJECTIVE
Employ truncation to target term variations



Notes:

At the end of this module you will be able to identify and incorporate search syntax defaults into your search strategies. You also will be able to apply other basic search tools, such as Boolean, or logical, operators, and proximity indicators to narrow or broaden results, as well as truncation to focus the search on the most relevant terms.

1.4 Automatic Retrieval of Word Variants

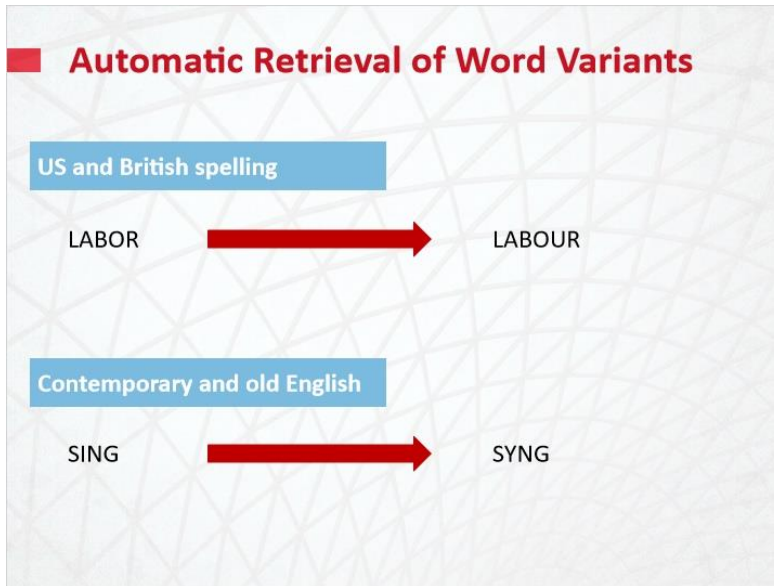


Notes:

The ProQuest platform is set up with some automatic search features, designed to help you build a more efficient search. One default search feature is the automatic retrieval of certain word variants, such as singular and plural nouns, in the English language. This applies to both regular and irregular plurals. For example, NURSE will also find NURSES, and CHILDREN finds CHILD. ProQuest also recognizes comparative and superlative adjectives. Searching for TALL will retrieve records with TALLER or TALLEST as well.

Search defaults and syntax contained in this session apply to both Basic and Advanced search modes

1.5 Automatic Retrieval of Word Variants



Notes:

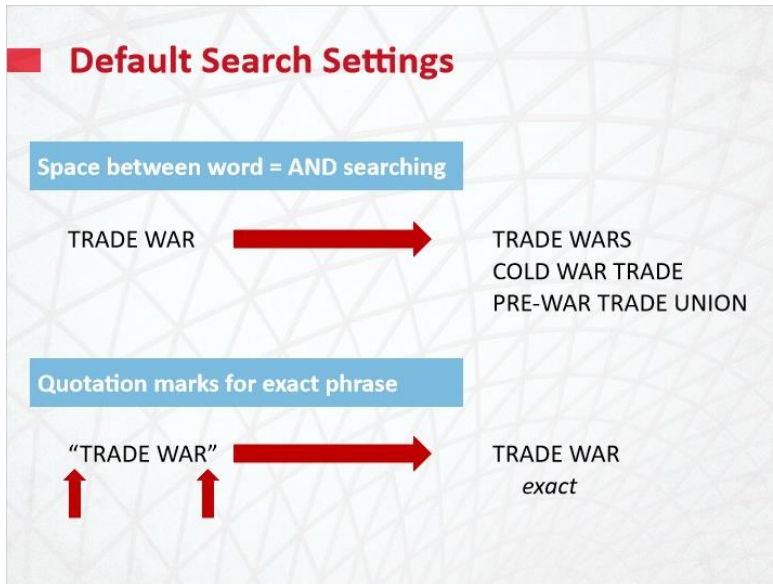
Default spelling variants include US and British versions of a word. For example, searching for LABOR, with an O R, will also retrieve LABOUR, with an O U R, and vice versa.

In addition, ProQuest recognizes and matches contemporary and older English versions of a word when appropriate.

If you do not want word variants to be applied to your search, simply enter the term in double quotation marks for an exact match.

Automatic word variants can be deactivated for individual My Research Accounts using My Research Preferences or at the organizational account level by your ProQuest Administrator using the ProQuest Administrator Module.

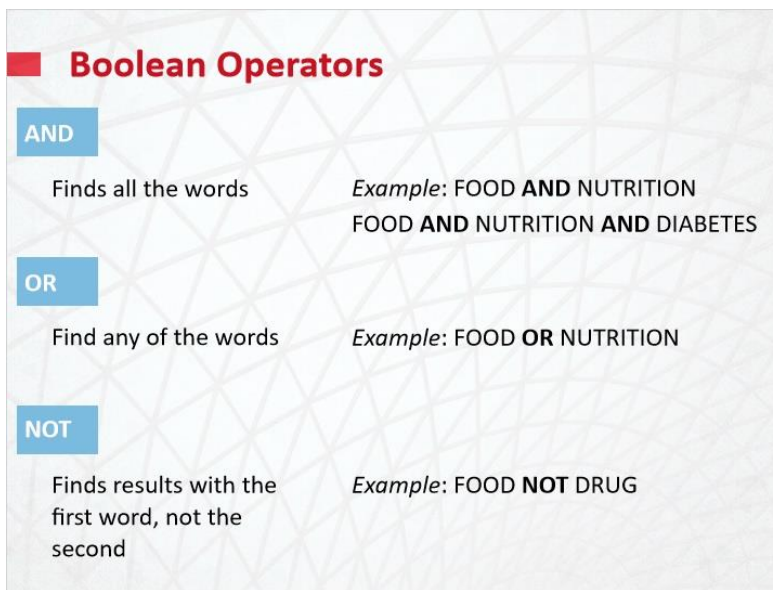
1.6 Default Search Settings



Notes:

A space separating terms in a search query assumes an AND. To illustrate, the search TRADE WAR retrieves documents that include the term TRADE and the term WAR at least once each anywhere in the document and not just as the phrase TRADE WAR. Since the terms need not be near each other, some results may not be relevant to the search intent. Use double quotation marks to search a series of terms as an exact phrase.

1.7 Boolean Operators



Notes:

Let's turn next to syntax a searcher can use to narrow, broaden, or otherwise fine-tune a search strategy, namely Boolean and proximity operators. The operator AND requires that documents retrieved contain each term at least once and links multiple concepts, each essential to the search. The more terms linked with AND, the more focused the search will be. The OR operator broadens a search since any *one* of the terms connected with OR must be contained in result documents, but not necessarily all. Use OR to incorporate synonyms or alternative terms for a concept. NOT finds documents that contain the first search term, but not the following term. Apply NOT thoughtfully to avoid eliminating relevant records. Note operators are not case-sensitive on the ProQuest platform. Capital and lower-case letters are treated the same. Bolding the syntax is not required, and is just used for illustrating examples here.

1.8 Proximity Operators

Proximity Operators

NEAR/#

COMPUTER **NEAR/3** CAREERS →
COMPUTER PROGRAMMING CAREER
CAREERS IN COMPUTER ENGINEERING

PRE/#

ATTENTION **PRE/3** DISORDER →
ATTENTION DISORDER
ATTENTION DEFICIT HYPERACTIVITY DISORDER
❌ not disorder with attention deficit


Notes:

Proximity operators find documents where search terms are within a certain distance from each other. NEAR followed by a slash then a number retrieves words within the specified number, in any order. For example, COMPUTER NEAR/3 CAREERS will retrieve *computer programming career* as well as *careers in computer engineering*. PRE followed by a slash and a number specifies that the first term must precede the next within that number of terms. Searching ATTENTION PRE/3 DISORDER retrieves *attention disorder* and *attention deficit hyperactivity disorder*, but not *disorder with attention deficit* because it does not meet the required order.

1.9 Pulling It Together

Pulling It Together

Use syntax to broaden or narrow:

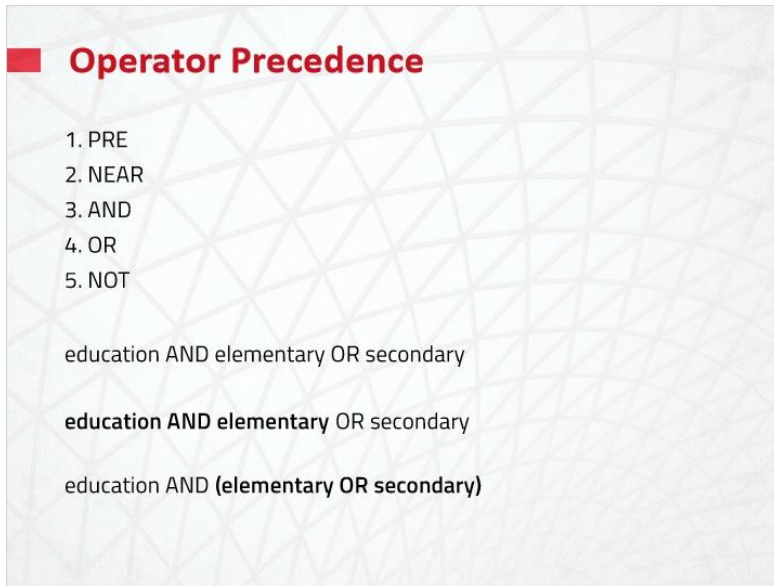


colony collapse 20,532 results	AND	colony AND collapse 20,532 results
		colony NEAR/3 collapse 3,392 results
		colony PRE/3 collapse 3,125 results
		colony PRE/0 collapse 2,999 results
		"colony collapse" 2,908 results

Notes:

To review how combining search terms affects search results and the efficiency of research: The ProQuest platform presumes an AND where there is a space between multiple search terms. You could also insert the operator AND as shown in the example search from SciTech Premium Collection. Using NEAR/3 narrows the search results because the terms must be within 3 words of each other. PRE/3 further limits the search because the first term must come before the second. PRE/0 is even more specific since there can be zero intervening terms between the first term preceding the second. Plurals, US and British spellings, and other default word variants remain active. For even more precision use quotation marks to search an exact phrase.

1.10 Operator Precedence

A slide titled "Operator Precedence" with a red square icon. It lists five operators in order of precedence: 1. PRE, 2. NEAR, 3. AND, 4. OR, 5. NOT. Below the list, three search examples are shown: "education AND elementary OR secondary", "education AND elementary OR secondary" (with "AND elementary" bolded), and "education AND (elementary OR secondary)" (with "elementary OR secondary" bolded and enclosed in parentheses).

Operator Precedence

1. PRE
2. NEAR
3. AND
4. OR
5. NOT

education AND elementary OR secondary

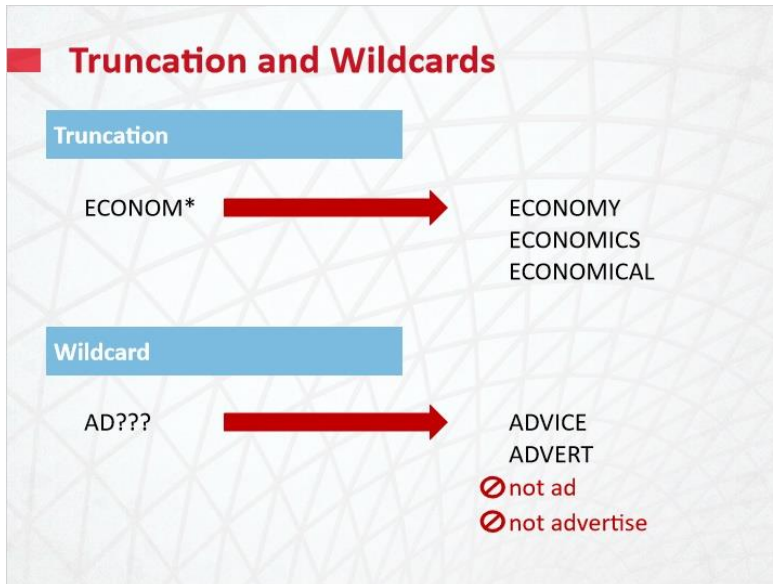
education AND elementary OR secondary

education AND (**elementary OR secondary**)

Notes:

The default processing order is PRE, followed by NEAR, then AND, OR, and NOT. For example, the search EDUCATION AND ELEMENTARY OR SECONDARY is processed as (EDUCATION AND ELEMENTARY), then OR SECONDARY. For more controlled searching, add parentheses to override the default processing order. Parentheses around (ELEMENTARY OR SECONDARY) means it will run before the AND to EDUCATION.

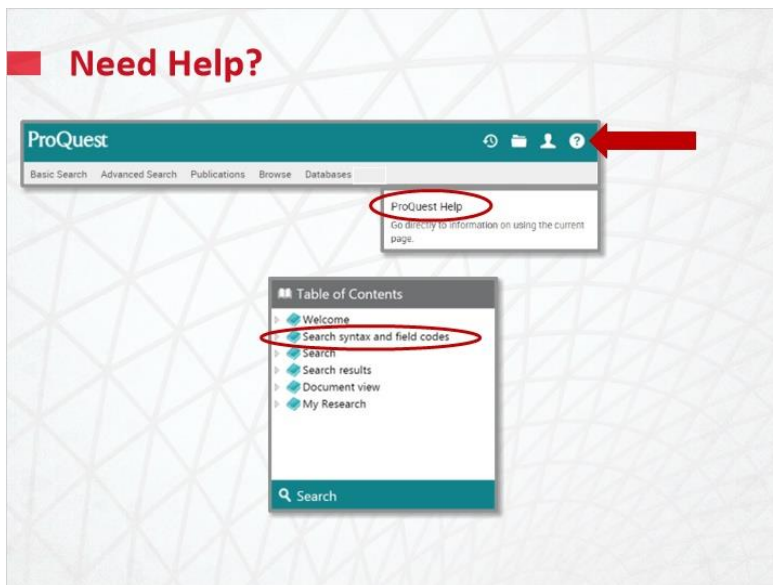
1.11 Truncation and Wildcards



Notes:

Finally, truncation and wildcards provide flexibility when searching words. Standard ProQuest truncation is an asterisk and retrieves up to 5 characters. This may be used in the middle or at the end of a word. So, searching for ECONOM* will find *economy*, *economics*, *economical*, etc. The question mark symbol is the wildcard character, replacing a single character at the inside or at the right end of a word. For example, searching AD??? will find *advice*, and *advert*, but not *ad* or *advertise* since it is looking for three characters.

1.12 Need Help?



Notes:

For more detail, navigate to **ProQuest Help** on the platform and review the Search Syntax content.

1.13 Test Your Knowledge

(Pick One, 10 points, unlimited attempts permitted)

Test Your Knowledge!

MULTIPLE CHOICE

Click the arrow next to your selection, then submit

Which of these shows ProQuest's operator precedence?

- > Proximity and quotation marks
- > Exact phrase, truncation, and wildcard
- > PRE, NEAR, AND, OR, NOT
- > Search syntax and field codes

SUBMIT **SKIP QUESTION** ProQuest EDUCATION

Correct	Choice	Feedback
	Choice A	The correct answer is PRE, NEAR, AND, OR, NOT
	Choice B	The correct answer is PRE, NEAR, AND, OR, NOT
X	Choice C	Congratulations!
	Choice D	The correct answer is PRE, NEAR, AND, OR, NOT

Notes:

Test Your Knowledge!

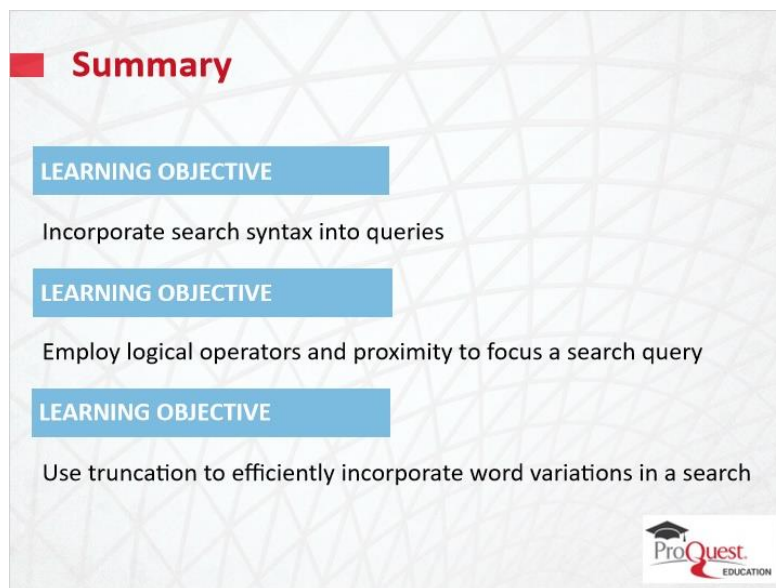
Click the arrow next to your selection, then submit to check your answer.

Which of these shows ProQuest's operator precedence?

Incorrect. The correct answer is PRE, NEAR, AND, OR, NOT. Press continue to move on.

That's correct. Congratulations! Press Continue to move ahead.

1.14 Summary



Summary

LEARNING OBJECTIVE


Incorporate search syntax into queries

LEARNING OBJECTIVE

Employ logical operators and proximity to focus a search query

LEARNING OBJECTIVE

Use truncation to efficiently incorporate word variations in a search



Notes:

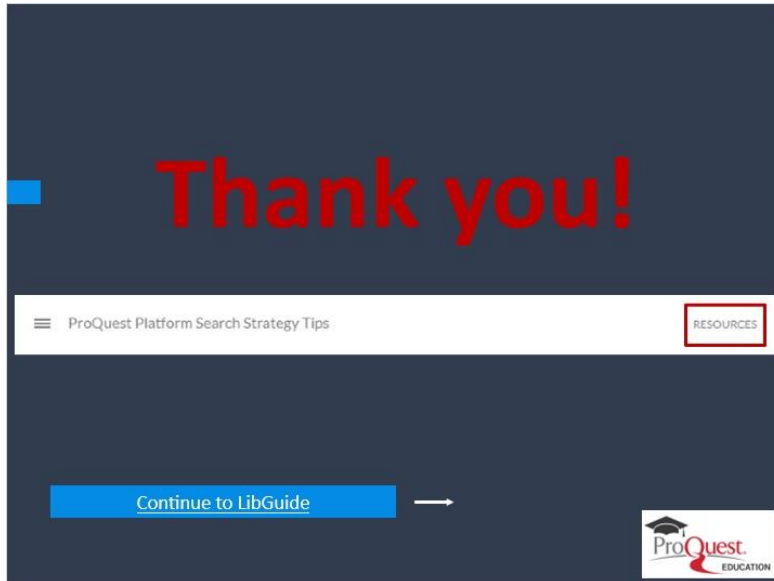
In summary, the learning objectives for this session have been to

Incorporate search syntax into queries.

Employ logical operators and proximity to focus a search query.

Use truncation to efficiently incorporate word variations in a search.

1.15 Thank you!



Notes:

This concludes this session. Thank you for joining! To learn more, please click on the **Resources** link, as illustrated, in the upper right corner of this session player, or visit our ProQuest Platform LibGuide page by clicking the LibGuide link at the bottom of this screen.

1.16 Copyright

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